

LETTER

FROM

An *English* GENTLEMAN
in DUBLIN,

TO

HIS FRIEND in ENGLAND.

DUBLIN:

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Dublin, October 17th, 1767.

DEAR SIR,

ON *Tuesday* last I arrived here after a tedious Journey, and disagreeable Voyage. I have very little to say worthy of your Notice, from *London* to *Chester*, as my Journey was made with some Rapidity. The Country about *Wolfsley Bridge* indeed is fine; and struck me with the sweet Remembrance of *M—*. The River *Trent*, the adjacent Meadows, the natural Views, the various Improvements, the hollow Valleys, the rising Swells, some naked, others crowned with Wood, afforded an enchanting Scene. I lay at *Meridon*, a magnificent and pleasant Inn, about six Miles from *Coventry*: It looks like a Nobleman's Seat. Great Part of the Country to *Chester* is extremely barren, and more dreary than any of the Southern Parts of *Wales*; it is really amazing to see such Tracts of wild uncultivated Lands, in Counties some so famous for Dairy, and all so well inhabited by Gentlemen of Property. These Wastes

if inclosed, and properly managed, would employ many useful and honest Hands, produce good Grain and artificial Pasture, afford an advantageous, pleasing Prospect, instead of that cold, and cheerless View it now exhibits. I saw hereabout a great deal of Barley in the Fields; whether owing to a Succession of wet Weather, or to late and bad Husbandry, I cannot presume to determine. I wish the Gentlemen of *Cheeshire* would meet, and form a Society to encourage Agriculture, by Premiums.

Chester is an ancient City. Here the xxth Legion called *Vitrix*, was stationed: you know that *Chester* is a corruption of *Castrum*; the *Welsh* Name for this City is very significant — *Caer Lleon gaur*, i. e. the Fortification of the great Legion. The Buildings at *Chester* are peculiar to the Place; projecting a considerable way, supported by strong Pillars, resembling the Piazzas of *Covent Garden*. These long Galleries, called Rows, are badly boarded, and afford a Stranger an odd Idea, and are indeed a disagreeable Incumbrance to this ancient City. I need not add that such Building render the Houses dark and dismal; along these Galleries there are Shops belonging to different Trades.

The Cathedral is old, at least it appears so, owing to it's mouldering Stone. The Carving is almost entirely dissolved, and I can see no Remedy for the ruinous state of this venerable Fabric, but the Casing it over with more lasting Materials. The Choir is neat and solemn, rather dark. The Altar Piece is good Tapestry representing the Apostle of the Gentiles striking *Elymas* blind. The Canopy over the Bishop's Throne is heavy. I was told that Dr. *Pocock* said the Chapter House was one of the finest he had ever seen; I could not see it. The Walks round the City, being the Town Walls, are airy and pleasant, flagg'd with
Stone,

Stone, kept clean, and in some Parts are broad enough for three, such as I am, to walk a-breast, for any two commodiously; having a Parapet about three Feet high on the outside, and a neat painted Rail on the inside. From these Walks you command a Prospect of the River *Dee*, and the adjacent Country; the great Forest of *Delemere* on the one Hand, and a picturesque View of *Flintshire*, finely inclosed and cultivated, even to the Brow of the Hills on the other. The Weather was so bad, and my stay so short, that I had neither Time, nor Opportunity to make any farther Remarks. From hence we went to *Parkgate*, the Downs of *Chester*, about twelve Miles. Here we embarked for *Dublin*; but after a Day and a Night encountering the Winds and the Waves, we were obliged to return to *Parkgate*. One would think that such People as occupy their Business in Great Waters might refrain from profaning his Holy Name, who causeth the stormy Wind to arise, and the mighty Waves to lift up their Voice.— When one Deep calleth another to carry them up to the Heaven, and down again to the Depth, that their Souls would melt away for very Troubles. But the Mouth of Wickedness is not easily stopped, nor can the restless Perturbation of an impious Heart be easily quieted. The next Day we weighed Anchor in Company with another Ship, which soon got a-head of us, and arrived at the Haven where she would be full thirty Hours before us, on board this Ship was Mrs. *Fitzmaurice*, the only one of that Noble and Worthy House of *H—ly* which I have not had the Honour to know. No doubt but this Lady, (with whom I think you are acquainted) has her Share of that good Sense, and lively Genius, which appear so eminently conspicuous in all the rest of that Family. You know the Obligations I owe to some of them, and you will readily allow, that I should have thought myself very happy had I the Opportunity to shew my Gratitude, by any
 officious

officious Services, which the Delicacy of the Fair Sex stand in need of when on board a Ship. I believe, Sir, that Sea-Sickness is not to be prevented by any Art; and as it is deemed so salutary, it might be imprudent to attempt it, however I cannot help thinking it to be dangerous in some Cases, and at some Times. In our second Attempt we were fortunate enough to get over the Bar of *Chester*, a Ridge of Sand, which sometimes proves a dangerous Obstruction. Here we constantly used the Lead Line, and often found only three Fathoms Water. The County of *Flint* appeared very beautiful on our larboard Side, to speak as a Sailor, adorned with Gentlemen's Seats, Lawns, Woods and Hills. We left the beautiful Bay of *Beaumaris* on the same Side; and on our Right Hand we saw the *Isle of Man*; and soon after, to the left, the well-known Promontory of *Holy Head*, where the Packet sails for *Dublin*; and where most People take their Passage, as it is reckoned to be safer as well as shorter, than from *Parkgate*. This Head is Part of the *Isle of Anglesey*, once the chief Seat of the *Druids*. Before us we saw a small Island, called the *Skerries*, on which is a Light House, very necessarily placed. Near this is a large Rock always above Water, called the Mouse. From hence we steered directly cross to *Dublin* about 20 Leagues North West. The first Land we discovered on the *Irish* Coast was a large, bold Promontory called *Howth Point*; near which are two Islands called *Lamb Bay* and *Ireland's Eye*. On the latter of these, the famous *Griffith Williams*, then Bishop of *Offory*, was Ship-wrecked, when he endeavoured to escape his Enemies. This Man was a warm Cavalier, and suffered a great many Distresses in those unhappy Times, which, if one may guess by his Writings, he, in great Measure, brought upon himself; for he appears to have had a licentious Spirit of Railing, and a Temper too

too sanguine, which no Cause, however good it be, can justify; but

parce Sepultis.

I think I should have given you some Account of our little Voyage. It is necessary to lay in Store of Provision before you leave *Parkgate*, there is none to be had on Board, unless you bring it with you, which we found necessary, being five Days and as many Nights at Sea. Our Ship was large and stout, and had twenty eight Beds, placed one above another close to the Sides of the Ship, and so narrow that even Mr. *L——d* could not turn in them. We found them damp and the Air too confined. I would advise those, who are too delicate to bear sitting up, to bring Hammocks or Cotts with them: and I am surpris'd they have none on Board. If you chuse a Bed you pay a Guinea for your Passage; the same for every Horse, and three for a Coach. We had one on Board, in which we constantly lived; our Party consisted of four, my three Chums, for I may call them so, were very genteel, sensible, and good humoured Men. In this Coach we breakfasted, dined, drunk Tea, played Cards, supped and slept; I can assure you it was by much the most eligible Apartment in all our floating Palace: a Reverend and worthy Baronet (whom I shall have occasion to mention to you hereafter) was the owner of it, and in this he gave us a Specimen of *Irish* Hospitality.

When we were disengaged from eating, Sleep, and Cards, we were agreeably entertained with the sportive Leap of Propoises, in great Numbers and very near us; whether it was to take their Pastime, or in hopes of Prey I cannot tell: at other Times, with the various and beautiful Plumage of innumerable Flocks of Birds which I had never seen before, particularly the
Puffin,

Puffin, a Bird rarely found on our Southern Coasts. Many pot these Birds, which are odious Stuff indeed. They are gregarious; and with many other Kinds they regaled themselves on the Fry of Herrings. How Good, how Wise, is the great Author of Nature, to ordain such prolific Increase to Fishes, who have so many Enemies within and without their Liquid Habitation. The Sea appeared of such a green Hue, as the Liquor in a blue Vat, when highly woaded; from which Colour this Sea is called the Green Sea by the Ancients, and by the *Welsh* and *Irish*. When we arrived near the Bay of *Dublin*, between the Points of *Howth* to the *North*, and *Dalkey* to the *South*, we left our Ship, and went on Board a Wherry. It is customary for these Wherries to ply when they see a Ship making for the Bay, to take in some Passengers who chuse to land as soon as possible; as the Ship perhaps cannot get to the Harbour until the next Tide. Beside, I think it not safe to remain on Board in case a Storm should rise, as the Ship must be greatly exposed to it. These Wherries sometimes land you at a Place called *Dunleary*, about six Miles from *Dublin*. But we chose to sail over the Bar, and up the River even to the Custom House. From the Bay we had a most delightful View of the Country on each Side the City: that to the Right is called *Fingal*, interspersed here and there with Gentlemen's Seats; particularly about *Clontarf*, which is a kind of *Hampstead* to *Dublin*. On the other Side the City, the Views are immensely fine, consisting of Flats, Swells, Woods, Fields, Seats, and the whole terminated by a Range of Hills, extending South West for 20 Miles along the Sea Coast. At the Mouth of the River *Liffey*, we pass just by a noble new built Light House, the Lantern of which is filled with large Candles instead of Fire. From hence commences a grand Wall of hewn Stone to secure the Harbour, which is designed to join another already

already begun, and will when finished be at least six Miles long to the very Quay. That Part next the City, is broad enough for a Coach and six to turn upon. When compleated it will be an immense Work and of infinite Service to the Harbour, which is now dangerous and exposed almost to every Point of the Compass. On the other Side the River Northward, there is another Wall, about a Mile long. Between these Walls we sailed up to the Custom House, which as you approach, the River grows narrower, indeed so confined that a small Boat can hardly squeeze through between the large Ships. They talk of building a Bridge about 800 Yards below the Custom House where the narrow Gut commences: this must either be a Draw Bridge, or the Custom House must be removed to some Place below it. When you land you must get your Baggage conveyed to the Custom House to be searched. If you attend yourself you will see it done in a very civil and genteel Manner, at least I found it so. You are then shewn to an adjacent Office where you insert your Name in a Book for that Purpose, for which you pay a Six-pence and another at the Door as you go out. It is customary to present the Land-waiter with Half a Crown: the Porters carry your Baggage wherever you order them. We spent that Day at the Tavern, and the Night at the Bagnio; neither of which are comparable to those in *London*. Indeed the Landlord's are civil, but many of their Houses are dark, dismal, and dirty, which cannot be well avoided as the Buildings are old, and confin'd in Situation, but however much better than the *London Inns*. I would not disoblige the People of *Ireland* by having a Pension on their Establishment, if I was Scavenger of *Dublin* and had 1000 Acres of Land within twenty Miles of it. It is to be wished they would remove out of their Streets the Dirt and the Beggars. I am told what they call cleaning their

Streets stands them in seventeen hundred Pounds a Year, there is room enough to hide many Millions in them, if you commit Dirt to Dirt. However many of the *London* Streets were in a worse Condition a few Years ago, than those of *Dublin* at this Day. The great Improvement going on here, will not I hope, permit this Nuisance to remain long. The Beggars are very numerous, absolutely insulting, and perfectly obstruct your Passage. Here are no Parish Rates. One of these Beggars, called Lord *Hackball*, rides triumphantly in his Chaise drawn by an Ass, begging thro' the Streets, this is the only one of this Sort, I have yet had the Honour to see, but I am told there are more of these Phaetonides. There is another who rides on Horse-back, rather on Ass-back, with his Equery before him, in a Coat of Mail, composed of old Ballads, a Fragment of which he now and then plucks off, and with his Master, grates your Ears with the most horrible Duet you ever heard; there is nothing wanting to make this Concert compleat, but the Accompaniment of the Ass. Happy am I when I see these Anti-Orpheans, at the length of a whole Street, as I can have some Time to avoid the terrible Vociferation, tho' at the Expence of Half a Pair of Shoes, in making the Circumvolution of Half a Dozen Streets, I never should, in all Probability, otherwise visit; by this Means I am already better acquainted with *Dublin* in three Days, than many others of a stronger System of Nerves may know of it in as many Months. The more I get acquainted with it, the more trouble it will give you. The Papers tell you when and where the Lord Lieutenant landed; his Procession to the Castle, &c. The next Day I was at his Levee; there was a fine Appearance, but nothing in comparison to what it will be when the Nobility and Gentry come to Town. The Parliament sits on *Tuesday* next, and it is expected there

there will be warm Debates on a Motion for a Septennial Bill. The Lord Lieutenant is so affable and obliging that he cannot fail of gaining the Esteem of the People. His Attendants, many of which I have the Honour to know, are such as deserve the Notice of their Master and the Public. Dr. *Young* and Sir *Robert Pynsent* are yet the only Chaplains here. The first I know only by Sight, but if I may guess by Appearance, I can trace great Sensibility and good Humour in his Countenance. The latter I have the Pleasure of being pretty well acquainted with. He is the unfortunate Baronet, who ought to have, and I am sure deserves, the Estate of the late Sir *William Pynsent*. He is a generous open-hearted Friend, universally beloved. I am told the Lord Lieutenant intends to provide for him. The Good, when unfortunate have a Right to the Patronage of the Great and Able. I know you will pardon me when I relate a generous Act; a Soul like your's will ever Sympathise. This Day the Lord Bishop of *Cloyne* [Lord *Bristol*'s Brother] presented Sir *Robert* to a Living said to be worth 300l. a Year, unasked. This was great, my dear Sir, I mean not as to its Value, but the Manner of doing it. I am in some pleasing Pain for both the Giver and the Receiver. Great Souls have great Emotions as well in conferring as in receiving Obligations. Which had the greater Sensibility, think you, He who said, * "There is no Pleasure like beholding the Face of that Man we have made happy." Or, he who said, † "Were my Abilities equal to my Wishes, there should be neither Pain or Poverty in the World." Where are the gay, thoughtless and dissipating Pleasures of the giddy World. How vain and unsubstantial! Great Preparations of this Sort are making to amuse the Idle. My Amusement shall be, if possible, among the sensible

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* Lord *Lyttleton*'s Persian Letters.† Mr. *Addison*.

sible and the solid, happy shall I be if I can but find such. The well known Mr. *Faulkner* (who has a very amiable Character, and who has done as much Service to this City as any one since the celebrated Dean of St. *Patrick*) is so kind as to supply me with any Book I want; and by this Means I intend to spend a good deal of Time with the great and the learned, such as Arch-Bishop *Usher*, Sir *James Ware*, and the Patriotic Author of the Draper's Letters, &c. Mr. *Faulkner* has in his Possession two original Pictures of Dean *Swift*; one done when in full Vigour of Soul and Body; the other (oh the Frailty of human Wisdom) in the unhappy Days of his Insanity. I was also shewn under the same hospitable Roof, a Marble Bust of Him, larger than the Life, (I may presume to give you my Opinion freely) admirably well executed. Mr. *Faulkner* added to my Pleasure in this Exhibition, by shewing me a Miniature Painting of this uncommon Man, well done: But a small Representation of him cut in Paper by a Lady, has I think, no equal. The Resemblance strikes you with Surprise, on both Sides; it being placed between two Glasses. The bordering is exquisite. There have been *Titian's*, *Rembrandt's*, *Lely's* and *Kneller's*, whose Pencils have charmed in all Countries; but *One* Lady, and this only, excels in the soft Touches of the well guided Steel. There is no Part of the visible Creation, so amiable as an ingenious, beautiful and sweet temper'd Woman. Whether this Lady equalled in external Beauties, I know not; but I am in love with the Delicacy of her Fingers.

There are two Things which here occur to me, relating to this wonderful Dean of St. *Patrick*. One, the Beauty of his Writings on serious Subjects: The Perspicuity, and Conciseness of the Draper's Letters; the Modesty and Orthodoxy of his Sermon on the Trinity,

Trinity, fully shew it. The Letters are better known to you than to me; but the Reason for his Excellency in the Sermon, has not yet been given, that I know of. He writes on this great Topic as a modest Man, and an humble Christian, fully sensible of Man's Incapacity to fathom the Almighty. Herein he was happy in being no Mathematician. It is observable that the Authors who have wrote most peremptory on this Point, were Persons of abstruse, metaphysical and mathematical Pedantry; and have thus endeavoured (infelicitèr Andent) to solve the hidden Things of God, by metaphysical Disquisitions, and mathematical Demonstrations, absurdly presuming to explain That, which is inexplicable.

The other Thing I would observe to you, is the universal Condemnation Lord Orrery is under for betraying, as they call it, the Secret Transactions of his Friend. I must beg leave to dissent from this Opinion, however popular. I have a great Veneration for the Name of *Boyle*. In my humble Judgment (and I think every Man has a Right to give his Opinion, with Decency, and especially where he supposes a great Name and Character has been misrepresented or misapprehended) this Noble Lord has not only appeared as an excellent Writer, but a very faithful Historian. A Biographical Writer is inexcusable, who does not adhere, strictly adhere to Truth in every Circumstance. Happy for *Swift* and the Public, that this elegant and impartial Writer has given the real Character of the Man. Had he not done so, we should in all Probability have seen the Dean in every disagreeable Light; all his Failings, real and fictitious, without any of those admirable Virtues to give them the least Foil, which this noble Lord has taken Care
to

to do, and we should have been deprived of one of the most easy, concise and justest epistolary Compositions that ever appeared in any Language. To me it appears, that this admirable Writer has had, not only the most sacred Regard to Truth, but also the most laudable Intention to correct Peculiarity and Vice, by shewing the Deformity of both, in Opposition to Steadiness of Mind and the Beauty of Virtue. Yet, he points out, almost in every Page, such amiable Qualities in his Friend, as if he had a Mind to throw them as a Veil, over the Imperfections of the Dean. Is this a Breach of Friendship; or can an honest Man owe more to an Individual than to the Public?

It should be considered also that he wrote to improve a darling Son. How far this was effected, I know not, as I never had the Honour of knowing him; but if I may speak from Experience, I can take upon me to say, that Lord Orrery's Epistolary Correspondence with his eldest Son, Lord Dungarvan, did not a little contribute to render him one of the most amiable and accomplished Gentlemen I ever had the Honour of knowing: You, Sir, who was so well acquainted with him can justify this Assertion. I am afraid Misrepresentations and Misapprehensions have done Lord Orrery more Injustice than ever his Lordship intended to Dr. Swift's Memory.

I cannot conclude without acquainting you the People here are remarkably hospitable, open hearted, generous, and extremely solicitous to please the *English*. In my next I shall endeavour to entertain you with a fuller Account of this City and it's Environs. I shall, impartially set forth their good or bad Oeconomy, at least

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least as it appears to me. So long as I stay in *Ireland*
I shall look on myself as Part of it, and think it my
Duty, as it is indeed my Inclination, to wish it every
Prosperity imaginable.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your obliged,

and affectionate

humble Servant.

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